

Ayan Lohchab shines yet again as Patna Pirates overcome table-toppers Puneri Paltan

Delhi, October 19, 2025: In a thrilling turnaround, Patna Pirates stormed back from a halftime deficit to overpower Puneri Paltan 38–27 at the Thyagaraj Indoor Stadium on Sunday. Ayan Lohchab was the star yet again with his 17 points leading the way, coupled with the defensive unit that allowed them to beat the table-toppers.

The opening ten minutes of the clash saw both teams engage in a tightly contested tactical battle, with neither side willing to concede an inch. The Pirates began by rotating their raiders smartly through Ankit Kumar and Ayan, while the defence, led by Deepak and Navdeep, held firm against Puneri's early incursions.

Momentum shifted several times in the early exchanges – Pirates' timely tackles countered Paltan's defensive resistance – and the intensity on the mat reflected the high stakes of this early-season encounter. With Ayan's swift raids and Ankit Kumar's consistent support, Patna managed to keep a slender lead despite Puneri's resilience in defence. At the end of ten minutes, the Pirates edged ahead, leading 8–5.

Ayan remained the standout for the Pirates, executing quick and confident raids to keep his team in touch, while Navdeep marshalled the defence with well-timed tackles. However, Puneri's defensive trio – Abinash Nadarajan, Rakesh, and Sanjay Enania – proved equally resolute, pulling off a couple of Super Tackles that shifted momentum in their favour. The exchanges were fierce, with neither team able to pull away decisively for much of the half.

The Paltan, buoyed by consistent contributions from Abhishek Gunge and Mohammad Nabibakhsh, found rhythm towards the closing stages of the first half. Their calculated raids and disciplined defending forced a few errors from the Pirates, allowing them to overturn Patna's early advantage. With both sides locked in a tactical battle Puneri Paltan edged ahead at the breather, leading 15–13 at halftime.

Ayan continued his stellar form, scoring crucial points and orchestrating multiple successful raids that put Puneri Paltan under pressure. Milan Dahiya also made his presence felt with key raids, including an ALL OUT, giving the Pirates a much-needed boost. Despite Puneri's attempts to claw back, led by Abhishek Gunge and Mohammad Nabibakhsh, the Pirates' cohesion on both ends of the mat allowed them to steadily chip away at the deficit.

The game remained competitive, with Paltan refusing to let the Pirates run away with the lead entirely. Abhishek Gunge mounted counter-attacks and Nabibakhsh delivered vital raids, keeping the scoreline tight and the momentum shifting. However, the Pirates' balanced performance in both raiding and defence saw them gradually establish a slender upper hand.

Building on the momentum from the earlier stages of the second half, the Pirates' raiders, led by Ayan and Stuart Singh, executed sharp, high-pressure raids that consistently found their mark. The Pirates' defence also tightened, with Ankit and Navdeep making crucial stops to thwart Puneri's attempts at a comeback. The combination of clinical raiding and disciplined defending allowed the Pirates to extend their lead while keeping the Paltan from mounting any sustained challenge.

Puneri Paltan did show flashes of resistance, with Abhishek Gunge and Nabibakhsh scoring intermittently. Each successful raid by the Pirates widened the gap, making it increasingly difficult for Puneri to close the difference. In the end, Patna Pirates' balanced performance across both raiding and defence saw them pull away decisively to claim a comfortable win.

Please find below the schedule for the PKL Season 12 matches on Tuesday, October 21:

Match 1: Bengal Warriorz vs Tamil Thalaivas

Match 2: U Mumba vs Jaipur Pink Panthers

Match 3: Haryana Steelers vs Gujarat Giants

Tickets are available on District by Zomato, the official ticketing platform for PKL Season 12:
<https://www.district.in/events/pkl-2025-delhi-team>

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The Pro Kabaddi League Season 12 is being broadcast live on the Star Sports Network and streamed on JioHotstar from 7:30 pm onwards.